

# **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**



Environmental Health (EH) originated modern public health practice. EH programs are founded upon an understanding that unsanitary and/or toxic environmental conditions can adversely impact a community's health. EH programs attempt to mitigate adverse health impacts using public education and via regulations which govern food



service, sewage, solid waste, drinking water, air quality, and disease carrying vectors. *Environmental Health improvements, not modern medicine, are primarily responsible for the vast increases in life expectancy and improved quality of living which occurred during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.*

## **Executive Summary**

In 2006, EH Management focused on maintaining work-process efficiencies implemented during FY '04 and '05. Overall funding for Division services was provided as follows: 78% user fees, 7% grants/contracts, and 15% discretionary funds. Major initiatives concerned the collection and reporting of select EH program outcome measures and the initial purchase of equipment necessary to begin file digitization. Other noteworthy accomplishments included implementation of Initiative 901 within 45 days and at little cost to the District and the adoption of revised program policies as recommended by our newly founded Food Advisory Committee.

## **Outstanding Challenges**

The Environmental Health Division faces an outstanding need to digitize existing records and modernize current field activities utilizing available technology. Such efforts are necessary to improve customer service, reduce administrative overhead, and increase management's ability to effectively monitor community health outcomes versus traditional productivity output measures.

## **2007 Priorities**

- Identify external funding sources for digitization project
- Prepare for the implementation of Washington's revised onsite septic regulations effective July 2007
- Establish computer based food safety testing in remote locations